

Remarks/Arguments

This paper is submitted responsive to the Office Action mailed July 21, 2006. Reconsideration of the application in light of the accompanying remarks and amendments is respectfully requested.

In the aforesaid action, the Examiner indicated that claims 17-27 contain allowable subject matter. By the present paper, claim 17 has been rewritten in independent form and is submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 has been cancelled without prejudice, and claims 2-9 have been amended to depend from claim 17. Thus, claims 2-9 and 18-27 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 10 has been rewritten in independent form and calls for an electrolyte assembly which has via lines for communicating the anode and the cathode through the electrolyte, and calls for the support member to include ribs extending along the via lines. The Examiner indicates that this subject matter is taught in Badding et al., US 2004/0028975 (hereafter "Badding"), and refers to Figs. 1A and 1B. Badding discloses in these figures an electrolyte 108 and having vias 114 and electrical conductors 104 in the vias 114. The Examiner states that 104 is an electrolyte support with ribs, but this is neither shown nor in Figures 1A and 1B nor disclosed in paragraph [0019] of Badding. It is respectfully submitted that claim 10 is allowable over the art of record.

Dependent claims 11-16 depend from claim 10 and are submitted to be allowable for this reason. These claims are also submitted to be allowable in their own right.

For example, claims 12 and 13 call for the ribs to be laminated and bonded, respectively, to the via lines. The ribs are not at all present in Badding. The Examiner asserts that

the sintering of sheet 108 and via holes 114 meets the limitations of claims 12 and 13. The structures sintered in Badding do not correspond to those of claims 12 and 13. Further, dependent claim 28 is drawn to a plurality of discrete electrolyte elements positioned in the openings of a grid support member. The Examiner's reasoning on this claim is not understood, as Hartvigsen does not in any location disclose a plurality of discrete electrolyte elements positioned in the openings of a support grid. Thus, dependent claims 12, 13 and 28 are also submitted to contain allowable subject matter in their own right.

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

It is submitted that the claims as amended herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

Appl. No. 10/790,577
Amdt. Dated Nov. 21, 2006
Reply to Office action of July 21, 2006

A request for one month extension of time accompanies this paper, along with authorization to charge the fee to a Deposit Account. It is believed that no additional fee is due. If any such fee or fee deficiency is due, please charge same to deposit account no. 02-0184.

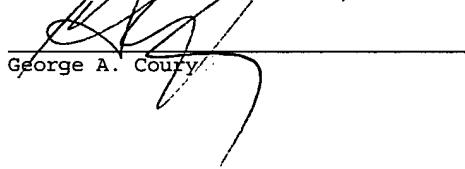
Respectfully submitted,

By _____


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313" on November 21, 2006


George A. Coury